

currently include the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, UVVA, in the list of covered offenses that would apply to crime victims abroad. The UVVA applies to violent Federal crimes in the United States, and to employees and contractors of the Department of Defense abroad under the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act. There is no reason that extending the long arm of Federal criminal law expanded under CEJA should exclude the UVVA.

No one would dispute the importance of holding government employees and contractors accountable abroad. I support the idea of this legislation because we should never have government employees or contractors committing serious crimes like rape or murder abroad with impunity. However, we need to think long and hard about the consequences of our actions if we legislate criminal extraterritorial jurisdiction too broadly absent a sufficient carve-out for authorized intelligence, law enforcement, and protective activities.

Until these concerns are addressed and further changes are included in the bill, I support holding this legislation on the Senate floor. No one should take my support for reporting this bill out of committee to mean anything more than an expression of my willingness to work with the sponsors on this topic to address these concerns going forward.

KYRGYZSTAN'S DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, this is a critical moment for Kyrgyzstan's democratic transition.

On June 27, 2010, the people of Kyrgyzstan took to the polls to adopt a new constitution for their country. The vote sent a powerful message to the region and to the world: that democracy is an idea whose appeal transcends ethnic divides.

Kyrgyzstan's President, Roza Otunbayeva, deserves enormous credit for orchestrating the transition to democratic rule after the deadly inter-ethnic clashes of last summer.

Since that tumultuous period, President Otunbayeva has overseen the first free and truly democratic parliamentary elections in central Asia. She has made it a priority to strengthen the rule of law, and she has moved to create a government that is increasingly responsive to the needs of all its citizens, regardless of ethnicity.

Kyrgyzstan today stands at a crossroads. Its people have expressed the desire to live in an open, free, and just society. Over the past year, we have witnessed some progress toward that goal, with credible parliamentary elections in October, the formation of a government in December, and a more vibrant media and political debate.

But let's be clear: Kyrgyzstan's democratic experiment faces considerable challenges.

Three, in particular, threaten the aspirations that powered last year's historic vote.

First, Kyrgyzstan's coalition government is beset by infighting. The task of rebuilding the country after the turmoil of the past year is daunting. But the challenges should also inspire a sense of common purpose. Upcoming Presidential elections in the fall present an opportune moment for Kyrgyzstan's leadership to articulate a political compact that unites the diverse elements of its society.

Second, the country's fractious political environment has impeded efforts to combat organized crime and corruption. Rampant crime has heightened the sense of insecurity among citizens, created an unfavorable climate for business, and slowed economic growth. To the government's credit, over 90 members of organized criminal groups are now behind bars. But much work remains to be done to reform Kyrgyzstan's judicial system and strengthen controls over its borders.

The United States can play a constructive role by providing financial support and technical expertise. We must also speak out forcefully for evenhandedness in the prosecution of cases related to last year's violence. Guaranteeing justice and equality before the law would go a long way toward alleviating interethnic tensions.

Finally, Kyrgyzstan must deal with the underlying causes of last year's violence. Reconciliation initiatives have been slow to get off the ground. And tensions between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities continue to fester.

Mr. President, Kyrgyzstan is a multi-ethnic state. Its diversity is a source of strength. But too often, opportunistic actors have exploited ethnicity to settle scores, acquire resources, and reclaim land in the fertile plains of the Ferghana valley.

Last June, Senator LUGAR and I authored a resolution on Kyrgyzstan calling for a full and fair investigation into the violence. The recently released report of the Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission is a welcome contribution to this debate, and I hope that all parties will give serious consideration to its findings.

The United States has committed over \$28 million for projects that will support reconciliation in Kyrgyzstan. A portion of these funds will engage civil society to increase links between Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities. U.S. assistance will also support implementation of the recommendations contained in the inquiry commission's report. Going forward, we must continually look for ways to bring Kyrgyz and Uzbeks together through economic and community-based initiatives.

I harbor no illusions about the road ahead. Indeed, no experiment—democratic or otherwise—has been without its fair share of setbacks. But I remain confident that the people of Kyrgyzstan will seize this moment and advance the cause of democracy for the

benefit of their country, the region, and the world.

REMEMBERING SAN FRANCISCO FIREFIGHTERS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of Lieutenant Vincent "Vince" Perez, and Firefighter and Paramedic Anthony "Tony" Valerio. Both of these heroes were long time veterans of the San Francisco Fire Department who were tragically killed in the line of duty fighting a fire on June 2, 2011.

During their many years of service to the city of San Francisco, both Vincent and Anthony earned the respect and admiration of those with whom they worked by consistently going above and beyond the call of duty. Both men led by example, and were considered shining stars among San Francisco's courageous and dedicated firefighters.

Vincent was a San Francisco native, growing up in San Francisco's Mission District and Bernal Heights neighborhoods. He attended St. Charles Elementary School, and graduated from Archbishop Riordan High School in 1981. After high school, Vincent attended City College of San Francisco, and then served his country in the U.S. Marine Corps and later as a deputy sheriff in Alameda County.

In 1990, Vincent joined the San Francisco Fire Department, ultimately rising to the position of lieutenant, where he supervised the crew of Engine Company 26, located in San Francisco's Diamond Heights neighborhood.

Vincent is survived by his mother Irene; siblings Lucio, Maryleen, and Alexander; many other family members and loved ones; and was preceded in death by his father Vincent and brother David.

Anthony was born in Fort Monmouth, NJ, and later moved to the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1975, he graduated from El Camino High School in South San Francisco and then went on to earn an associate's degree from San Francisco State University.

He embarked on his career in public service in 1980, starting as an EMT at Acme Western in the city of Oakland and later as a paramedic for 13 years with the San Francisco Department of Public Health. In 1997, Anthony began serving the City as both a firefighter and paramedic who was assigned to numerous fire stations in the city, including his last assignment with Engine Company 26.

Anthony is survived by his parents Lorraine and Frank; siblings Jacqueline, Donna, Marina, Laura, Mark, and Kevin; and many other family members and loved ones.

Lieutenant Vincent Perez and Firefighter and Paramedic Anthony Valerio dedicated their lives to their family, community, and Nation, and they will long be remembered for their courage and dedication. Their service and bravery inspired others and both

will be deeply missed by all who knew them. I extend my deepest sympathies to both men's families, colleagues, and friends.

WESTON PLAYHOUSE THEATRE COMPANY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is a delight to call the Senate's attention to the record of 75 years of quality productions achieved by the Weston Playhouse Theatre Company as they celebrate this major milestone with their community and friends. Among its many accolades—including the Moss Hart Award for Best Production in New England for "Floyd Collins"—Weston's Playhouse has earned a national reputation as a professional theatre. As Vermont's oldest theater, and one of the 15 oldest theatre companies across the United States, the Weston Playhouse has entertained families and visitors from New England and beyond since its founding in 1935. Its first professional season in 1937 included the opening of Noel Coward's "Hay Fever," featuring young actor Lloyd Bridges. Since then the Weston Playhouse has grown to include musicals and late-night entertainment, cradled in Weston's small village of 640 people.

Consistent with Vermonters' willful determination and hard work, Weston's Playhouse Theatre Company endured a 1962 fire that destroyed the original playhouse building. Despite this hardship, the community pulled their resources together and continued to provide Vermonters and New England with quality theatre and musical experiences. Today the company serves 25,000 Vermonters and Vermont visitors each year with its devoted staff, talented artists, and dedicated board. The Weston Playhouse Theatre Company has routinely met their goals of making live theatre accessible and meaningful to a broad population of Vermonters. Resource support through the National Endowment for the Arts has allowed the playhouse to expand its offerings of cultural experiences to thousands of elementary, middle and high school aged children every year. Their outreach programs have promoted educational productions and have toured often throughout Vermont and New England while continuing to produce prestigious regional and world premieres.

Marcelle and I have always enjoyed attending theatre productions in Vermont, and we have wonderful memories of the time we have spent with the Weston Playhouse Theatre Company, as well as of the wonderful people we have met at the theatre. It is important to our State that we continue to host diverse actors and actresses on Vermont's stages, enriching the lives of Vermonters across the State. Anyone who has contemplated a painting in a museum, examined an original manuscript or composition, or disappeared into a performance as the lights dimmed—and has gained a greater understanding of both the artist and

the subject as a result—knows the power and importance of these works in our lives. I am proud to join in honoring the Weston Playhouse Theatre Company for 75 wonderful years of achievements that have enriched our heritage and the quality of life in the marvelous Green Mountain State.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING BEN GRUSSENDORF

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, today I wish to memorialize a great Alaskan, Mr. Ben Grussendorf. A public servant, master teacher, community activist, legislator, outdoorsman, and all-around gentleman, Ben Grussendorf died June 17, 2011. He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Karen, son Tim, daughter Karla, and four grandchildren.

Born February 23, 1942, in Grand Rapids, MN, Ben attended the University of Minnesota, where he earned a B.A. in political science and an M.A. in political science education.

In 1967, eager to fish, hunt, and hike, Ben and Karen moved to Sitka, AK, to teach. Ben taught government and social sciences at Sitka High School and Sitka Community College, but his attraction to politics and government soon drew him to help shape a strong future for his adopted community. Ben was elected to the Charter Commission, and became its chair, leading the effort to write unification documents which continue to govern the city and borough of Sitka. He was subsequently elected for two terms to serve as mayor of this unified government. In 1980, Sitka voters sent him to the State House of Representatives where he served 10 terms, a full 20 years.

In the legislature, Ben earned a reputation as a diplomat. He was a man who focused on problems and solutions rather than party and politics. The respect he showed by listening to differing viewpoints opened the door for people of all backgrounds and political persuasions to create a climate of compromise. Ben knew true leadership was born, not in brazen ideas or self-promotion, but in the ability to win allies and build coalitions. Because of his ability to nurture friendships on both sides of the aisle, he was elected as Speaker of the House for an unprecedented three terms.

As speaker, Ben brokered compromises which put the public first. Fair to everyone, his calm composure and down-home sense of humor defused tension and brought people together; his vision and diplomacy kept them focused on the greater good.

Throughout his tenure in the House, Ben was renowned for his patience, discretion, and expertise. He knew the nooks and crannies both of the legislative process and the issues. Colleagues relied on him for inside knowledge of Alaskan politics to affect change and

make a difference. They remember him as an important teacher and mentor, one who led by example.

When Ben announced his retirement from the Legislature in 2000, he cited his original Alaska draw—time to hunt, fish, and walk his dogs. Because of his passion for wildlife and capitalizing on his legislative expertise, Governor Tony Knowles convinced him to accept appointment to the Alaska Board of Game in 2001. There, he put his listening and diplomatic skills to further use, tackling important challenges such as caribou herd management and subsistence policy. His effectiveness and diplomacy earned him successive reappointments by Governors Murkowski, Palin, and Parnell.

Whether hunting, fishing, hiking, gardening, or just observing, Ben was an outdoorsman at heart. He was also a writer who kept a journal, wrote short stories and drafted manuscripts about subjects he well understood—politics and nature.

Ben Grussendorf's devotion to Sitka and to Alaska, whether as a teacher, a legislator, a member of the Board of Game, or a member of community service organizations, was inspirational. He made a difference with every commitment, and his years of working on issues important to people throughout the State will be part of his legacy as an Alaska statesman. He will be deeply missed by his family and his many friends.●

DEVILS POSTPILE NATIONAL MONUMENT

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the centennial of Devils Postpile National Monument in the Eastern Sierra of California.

When Devils Postpile was first surveyed in the early 20th century, it became apparent to geologists that its distinctive formation and features of the surrounding landscape provided a special window into the volcanic and glacial processes that shaped the Sierra Nevada as a whole.

The cliff of columnar basalt that constitutes the Devils Postpile, so named because it looks like tall posts piled together, is one of the wonders of the geological world. The columns can reach heights towering more than 60 feet. Those on the west front are high, straight and clean-cut; those at its southern end stand out for their curvature.

Shortly after the initial survey, U.S. Forest Service Engineer Walter Huber learned of a plan to blast portions of the Devils Postpile to create a dam that would flood the middle fork of the San Joaquin River and provide power to nearby mining operations. Mr. Huber considered the idea as a "wanton destruction of scenery" and began the effort to establish a monument to protect Devils Postpile along with the nearby Rainbow Falls, a spectacular